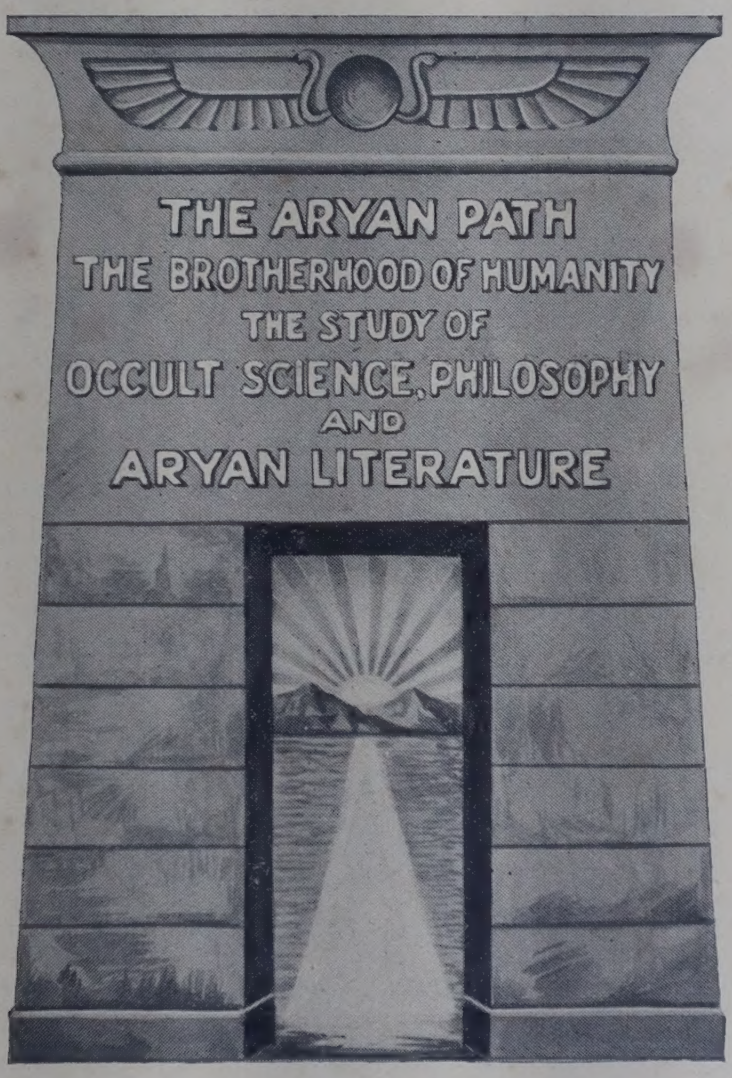
THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



Vol. VIII No. II

September 17, 1938

All of us have to get rid of our own ego, the illusory, apparent self, to recognize our true Self in a transcendental divine life. But if we would not be selfish, we must strive to make other people see that truth, to recognize the reality of that transcendental Self, the Budh, the Christ or God of every preacher.

Teach the people to see that life on this earth, even the happiest, is but a burden and a delusion, that it is but our own Karma, the cause producing the effect, that is our own judge, our saviour in future lives, and the great struggle for life will soon lose its intensity.

—FROM A MASTER'S LETTER.

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(b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study ; and

(c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

There is no Religion Higher than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th September, 1938

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th September 1938. VOL. VIII. No. 11.

DISCIPLINE OF BRAHMACHARYA

Chastity is one of the major virtues inasmuch as, without chastity, societies lack energy, and individuals are condemned to perpetual unawareness, attachment and animality.—ALDOUS HUXLEY.

The writer of these words is Mr. Aldous Huxley, erstwhile materialist and man of the world, whose mind has undergone a conversion and who now belongs to the small but steadily increasing band of Western thinkers who realise how very greatly intellectual and material progress has outstripped moral and ethical development. Contact with the teachings of the great Enlightened One, the Buddha, and persistent impartial reflection upon the chaotic conditions of Western civilization which is heading for disaster, has enabled him to perceive that which Theosophy has been stressing for the last half century—namely, the imperative necessity for individual reform, through self-knowledge and self-control, the subdual and purification of the lower-self by the Inner Ego. Our feelings and actions are rooted in thought, and our concepts of the meaning and purpose of incarnated existence shape and mould them. At one time Mr. Huxley disbelieved in the existence of the Soul, the immortal entity within mortal man, thinking that, to use the language of the *Gita*, "creatures are produced alone through the union of the sexes, and that all is for enjoyment only"; therefore being logical he advocated sex indulgence as one of the means of physical enjoyment, and valued sense enjoyment as the *raison d'être* of life on earth. To the rank materialist, any talk of the necessity for restraint must needs appear meaningless. But now that Mr. Huxley begins to perceive man, not as an intelligent animal but as a God in the making, his concept of morality has undergone a radical change. So when stating that "In life, ethics and metaphysics are interdependent", he is speaking from personal experience.

In the public world of to-day the outstanding exemplar of the truth of Brahmacharya is Gandhiji, whose spiritual philosophy of life has enabled him to render such priceless service to India and to humanity. He has been explaining and popularising the ideal of Brahmacharya. In his enlightening book, *Self-restraint versus Self-indulgence*, which should be read and pondered over by all practitioners of soul life, Gandhiji writes :—

> He who knows the perishable nature of flesh from the imperishable nature of the spirit, instinctively knows that self-realisation is impossible without self-discipline and self-restraint. The body may either be a play-ground of passion, or a temple of self-realisation. If it is the latter, there is no room there for libertinism. The spirit needs must curb the flesh every moment.

Spiritual discipline has as its pivot the realization and retaining of the awareness of the Soul within. Mr. Huxley points out how this is impossible for those who are unrestricted in sexual indulgence.

> Awareness is the condition of any moral behaviour superior to that of animals. The individual cannot transcend himself unless he first learns to be conscious of himself and of his relations with other selves and with the world. A measure of sexual continence is the pre-condition of awareness and of other forms of mental energy, conative and emotional as well as cognitive.

The two main reasons why all the great spiritual teachers of the race insist upon chastity are : (1) No individual identified with his bodily functions can realise himself as a spiritual soul ; and (2) Chastity is the means whereby vital energy or *Prana* can be conserved and directed towards the higher planes of consciousness. Gandhiji points out how—

> the vacillation, and the disinclination to do hard and sustained work, the physical inability to perform strenuous labours, collapses of enterprises brilliantly begun, the want of originality, one notices so often, are due largely to excessive indulgence.

Theosophy teaches—"As God creates, so man can create." Creative Logos is man's highest appellation ; and the generative organs of the physical body correspond on the plane of Matter to the Soul's power to create on the plane of Spirit. Kriyasakti in man is a divine gift, a reflection of—

the first conscious *all-embracing desire* for universal good, love, and for all that lives and feels, needs help and kindness, the first feeling of infinite tender compassion and mercy that arose in the consciousness of the creative ONE FORCE, as soon as it came into life and being as a ray from the Absolute. (H.P.B.)

The Kama-Deva of the early Vedic period, which is pre-eminently the divine desire of creating happiness and love, has become on the lower material plane, Kama, the animal passion of the beast in man. These same dual aspects of the Creative Force are symbolised in Greek Mythology as Eros—Universal Impersonal Love, which works for the spiritual elevation of the race ; and Cupid—the blind god—the force of selfish lust which degrades man to a level lower than that of any beast. The mindless animal world only seeks *natural* union in its proper seasons. Abusing the creative power, desecrating and wasting the life-essence for no other purpose except bestial personal gratification, is a phenomenon that occurs only in the human kingdom. This has made of man, in the words of H. P. B. :—

A helpless, scrofulous being,..the wealthiest heir on the globe to constitutional and hereditary diseases, the most consciously and intelligently bestial of all animals.

The supreme tragedy of human evolution, the illegitimate alliance of the mind of the God with the beast in the blood, has given birth to the false philosophy of hedonism, and the prevalent notion that control of passion is impossible and unnatural. Mr. Huxley explains how sex addiction is like unto habit-forming drugs—*e.g.*, alcohol, morphia, cocaine —a veritable demoniac possession, leading to torment of body and mind. Chastity, far from being abnormal, is the master-key to physical, mental and moral well-being. Writes Gandhiji :—

Many are the keys to health, and they are all quite essential ; but one thing needful, above all others, is Brahmacharya. Pure air, pure water and wholesome food certainly contribute to health. But how can we be healthy if we expend all the health that we acquire ? How can we help being paupers if we spend all the money that we earn ? There can be no doubt that men and women can never be virile or strong unless they observe true Brahmacharya.

That which makes abstinence and chastity so difficult is the indulgence in the whims and wants of the petty personal self. Theosophy demonstrates how there is a very close connection and interaction between (1) the sin of self, (2) the sin of speech, (3) the sin of sex. All three are creative potencies, and the misuse of any reacts adversely upon the other two. As sex-control is impossible without self-control, we have to regulate our reading, our recreation, our food, etc., according to the principles of the Kingly Science of Theosophy. Above all we must be extra careful about our companions. This is more difficult than is ordinarily recognized, because hypocrisy is the religion of many who follow, as far as their sense-cravings would permit, the commandment—" Thou shalt not be found out."

Nor is chastity to be practised only in non-married life. Save and except using the sex-function for the creative purpose, which is holy and sacred in marital life, Brahmacharya should be observed. The Grihasta's creative power can and should be used in the building of the home. Moreover, true union is the contact of mind with mind, of heart with heart, of soul with soul—where the wife regards the husband, not as a possession but as a partner, where the husband treats his wife not as a chattel but as a companion—and where both help each other to tread the Aryan Path, the Path of Nobility. Thus alone can lust be transmuted into the love that purifies, protects, elevates. In the opinion of Gandhiji abstinence practised with the desire to strengthen the bond of love, to purify it, and to conserve the vital energy for a better purpose, does not lessen but strengthens mutual affection. Then physical union will be seen for what it is—the means of procreation to be used when there is desire for progeny.

A deadly foe to true continence—a force of evil with lethal influence which is working havoc—is artificial birth prevention. On this subject Gandhiji's views, quoted at length in these columns for February 1931 are truly Theosophical. He writes in his book :—

We need, not lessons in the use of contraceptives and helps to our being able to satisfy our animal appetite, but continuous lessons to restrain that appetite in many cases even to the extent of absolute continence.

The one sure method advocated by all spiritual teachers is self-control. Birth-prevention not only degrades man but produces death of the Soul and leads directly to race-suicide.

Mr. Huxley does not stop by demonstrating the need of continence but also indicates the imperative necessity for correlating chastity with charity—directing human energy by the major virtues of love and intelligence.

As a matter of historical fact, the energy released by sexual continence has frequently been directed towards thoroughly immoral ends. Mental and social energy is comparable to the energy of falling water ; it can be used for any purpose that men choose to put it to—for bullying the weak and exploiting the poor just as well as for exploring the secrets of nature, for creating masterpieces of art or for establishing union with ultimate reality.

This brings us to one of the most vital and important factors—the practice of continence or Brahmacharya in thought. People sometimes fancy that as long as the deed is not done virginity and

celibacy are observed. This is not so. Mind is the battle ground and when its integrity is allowed to be spoiled by our Kamic nature, its further degradation is certain. The course of that degradation is—incontinent thoughts, incontinent words, incontinent deeds.

Many are the subtle ways by which man's animal nature satisfies itself in this matter. One of them is the desire to learn about the evils of sex-indulgence and talk on the subject. The scourge is widespread and our civilization which fears smallpox and typhoid and other so-called contagious diseases does not even recognize sex-mania as a highly contagious disease. Let the aspiring practitioner guard himself against unconscious contagion. Unless his mission in life is to fight the scourge directly let him eschew reading and discussing about sex-indulgences. Brahmacharya covers a wide field as will be evident from what Gandhiji writes in *Harijan* for 23rd July of this year. The observance of Brahmacharya, he says—

> does not mean mere physical self-control. It means much more. It means complete control over all the senses. Thus an impure thought is a breach of *brahmacharya;* so is anger. All power comes from the preservation and sublimation of the vitality that is responsible for creation of life. If the vitality is husbanded instead of being dissipated, it is transmuted into creative energy of the highest order. This vitality is continuously and even unconsciously dissipated by evil, or even rambling, disorderly, unwanted, thoughts. And since thought is the root of all speech and action, the quality of the latter corresponds to that of the former. Hence perfectly controlled thought is itself power of the highest potency and can become self-acting. That seems to me to be the meaning of the silent prayer of heart. If man is after the image of God, he has but to will a thing in the limited sphere allotted to him and it becomes. Such power is impossible in one who dissipates his energy in any way whatsoever, even as steam kept in a leaky pipe yields no power.

This is the Theosophical position. Theosophical ethics are difficult to practise without the illumination of our understanding which results from Theosophical metaphysics. Saintly people emphasise ethics and virtues ; philosophers stress the value of metaphysical principles and cosmic ultimates ; ethics without philosophy confuse people who, like wanderers in a maze do not see the purpose of going round and round the labyrinth of life ; philosophy without ethics is like verbal prayers which never reach heaven.

Theosophy or Wisdom-Religion combines and harmonizes philosophy and ethics, and to perceive the vital truth of Brahmacharya it is necessary to grasp the facts of our philosophy which will make the practice of our ethics not only possible but also supremely profitable.

OUR DIET AND OUR DESTINY

Viscount Astor, as Chairman of a committee of health experts, economists, agriculturists and representatives of welfare organizations, has studied in detail the problem of diet and the grave danger of malnutrition, not only to the individual but, by repercussion, to the well-being of the nation. Our problem is not, as Viscount Astor points out in the *N. Y. Times Magazine* (May 8th), one of quantity. There is ample food available. Measures to increase enlightened consumption are preferable to wholesale destruction of crops to maintain prices while millions all over the world die of hunger. " If the world would face the nutrition problem with this philosophy governing its decisions, there would be an immense expansion of trade, new and vastly increased agricultural production and an end of thoughts of controlling output downward."

What baffles experienced dieticians is the quality of food consumed. Everything from simple vegetables to the most loathsome forms of animal organs and tissues is preserved. Fruits and milk are dried up to prevent decomposition and " revivified " in the home with a little water. Even ground up or saturated glands and gland secretions from animal and human bodies are made to serve as substitutes for health-giving food. What cannot be preserved is imitated, and a gullible public, anxious to regain or preserve youthful vigour, is led into dangerous practices which are nothing short of unconscious black magic.

Arthur Kallet and P. J. Schlink in their *100,000,000 Guinea Pigs* show up the dangers in every-day foods, drugs and cosmetics, while Arthur McCann in his book *The Science of Eating* sounds an equally alarming warning against artificially preserved foods and unnatural diet.

Only a few weeks ago Mr. Banfield in the English House of Commons asked the Minister of Health "whether he is aware that there is no legal standard of content and purity for jam, and that adulteration and misdescription are common throughout the country ". The Minister answered that the Food and Drugs Bill, at present before Parliament, proposed regulations dealing with this matter. We agree with the Editor of *The Animal's Defender* (June) whose comment on the above is " Better late than never." We will quote him further :—

> Surely one of the first things to do is to ensure, so far as legislation can ensure it, that the people's food shall be of unimpeachable quality. With regard to only too many articles of diet it certainly is not so at present, and the amount of adulterated food we are each of us compelled to consume is almost certainly inimical to health.

Turn from English jam to American fruits and vegetables : What say Messrs. Kallet and Schlink ?

Fruits such as apples, apricots, pears, and peaches turn brown when they are sliced and dried. To prevent discolouration and to improve the appearance of the dried fruit...the driers expose the fruit to fumes of sulphur dioxide gas. Many years ago, the experts of the Department of Agriculture decided not to allow more than 350 parts of sulphur dioxide gas for each 1,000,000 parts of fruit, so as to make sure that there would not be enough sulphur dioxide to injure those eating the fruit...Nevertheless, the dried apricots and other dried fruits delivered this morning to a million kitchens contained from three to five times as much sulphur dioxide as was originally considered the safe maximum...

Back in 1911, the Department of Agriculture had a study made by a Board of Consulting Scientific Experts, on sulphurous acid and sodium sulphite. They found that sulphur dioxide in quantities of from three-tenths of a gram to a gram daily gave rise in some individuals after a period of some months to symptoms indicating injurious effects. The symptoms noted were : " Increase in uric acid, destruction of white corpuscles, belching of sulphur dioxide gas, teeth ' on edge ', inflammation of the mucous membrane of the mouth, symptoms of malaise, headache, backache, sick appearance, nausea, albuminuria, sensation of cold, white colour (anemia), dull eyes, listless manner..."

...if you eat apples, pears, cherries and berries, celery, and other fruit and vegetables, you are also eating arsenic, and there is good reason to believe that it may be doing you serious, perhaps irreparable injury. The source of this dangerous poison is the lead arsenate which is sprayed on fruits and on some vegetables to protect them from the coddling moth and other insects destructive to crops....In the Northwest, after a dry season in which an unusual amount of spraying was necessary, apples were found to be contaminated with more than ten times the legal maximum of arsenic...

To avoid arsenic poisoning we are cautioned :

Avoid eating the skins of fruits which contain residues of insecticides until an authority you can trust tells you which are safe, and why.

Perhaps no one would have eczema, patch baldness, or even discoloured skin due to arsenic if arsenic were taken into the body only with one or two fruits or vegetables containing but one part in ten million of arsenic ; but with a large number of these and other foods contributing their daily quotas, the danger is many times compounded. The following is a list of foods in which, the investigators state, arsenic was found : peas, carrots, apples, mushrooms, pears, rice...eggs, potatoes cauliflower, spinach, white beans, cabbage, lettuce, dried peas.

Those Indians who copy western habits and modes of life ought to take note of these extracts, and desist from introducing into India poisons of " civilized " ways and modes of Europe and America such as tinned foods and fruits sprayed with arsenic.

The taking of food, whether mental or physical, is a sacred function. We should be as much revolted by the idea of feeding the body on questionable or positively bad food as we should be in corrupting the mind with unethical principles or wrong knowledge. And as the student endeavours to cleanse and calm the mind before studying his carefully selected texts, so too should he prepare his body before nourishing it with wholesome clean food in wholesome clean surroundings.

Science classifies food according to whether it supplies energy and body-building ingredients, or maintains the health. But thousands of years ago the ancients divided foods into scientifico-psychological categories. There was that food which prolonged life, vigour and health of body and mind which was preferred by the spiritually minded or *satvic* nature. There was that which, being overseasoned, hot and dry, caused pain and recommended itself to the passion-minded or *rajasic* nature. And there was a third kind which furnished the indolent or *tamasic* with rotting and impure food.

The Vedantic classification of the human constitution names the Physical body, as *Annamaya Kosha,* the Sheath of Food which the Soul uses. Food is used in the mystical sense as " the lowest form in which the Supreme Soul is manifested ". The conception of food in Hindu philosophy is profound and occult—divinities are said to be presiding over foods, which are of various kinds. Just as Elementals are connected with physical food, so Devas are with psychical and spiritual foods. In the Upanishads the very way to re-birth is said to be through food. The Eastern Occultists are masters of Dietetics, but they take into account the subtle and superphysical aspects of edibles, the very existence of which is unknown to modern doctors and chemists. Mr. Judge who was familiar with these Eastern Teachings once wrote :—

Not that the self *exists* by reason of food, but that as a manifestation, as one causing the body to be visible and to act, the self subsists in that state by means of the food which is used. It is really a reversed translation, and ought to read—as I think—" The self exists in close proximity to the heart and causes the body to exist by reason of the food which it takes in for its subsistence." That is, continual reference is had to the doctrine that if the self were not there the body would not exist. Yes : it also means that the self procures vital airs from the food which the one life causes to be digested. For note that which you know, that did we not take food the material unit of the trinity would die and the self be disappointed, and then would get another body to try in again. For is it not permitted to each one to try and set up a habit in that material unit whereby we may as incarnated beings know the self ? Then when that is done we do not live as others ; but all the same, even then, the self must subsist, so to say, while in manifestation, by means of food, no matter if that food be of a different character, corresponding to the new state. Even the Devas subsist by food. You know " they enter into that colour, or sound, or savour, at the sacrifice, they rise in that colour, etc., and by it they live."

DISCRIMINATIVE ACTION

Dr. C. E. M. Joad struck a timely note in his address at the annual dinner of the Rationalist Press Association (*The Literary Guide*, July 1938) when he condemned action for action's sake, which is profitlessly where not dangerously engaging so many men in modern times. He cited two propositions of the Greek philosopher Pyrrho, whom Dr. Joad describes as " the founder of scepticism ", the adoption of which would check precipitancy and would make the world both steadier and saner. Pyrrho's tenets were (1) " that one should not believe in any proposition unless there was some reason to think that it was true " and (2) " that one should not embark on any course of action unless there seemed better reasons for performing the action than for not performing it ". And Dr. Joad added :—

> That is the type of mind which, I think, more than any other, is required in the modern world—a mind which refuses to take action unless there is some reason to suppose that it is better to take it than not to take it. I mention that because we live in a world which appears to think that action is a good in itself.... In England, perhaps, we know this tendency most distinctively as the praise of the god of speed. Here is a world in which people will move heaven and earth in order to save five minutes, and yet not have the faintest idea what to do with them when they have saved them.

The second of Pyrrho's propositions is a variation of a wise injunction, attributed to Zoroaster, " When in doubt, abstain ", and a most succinct presentation of the Law of Necessity as the proper criterion of action. If we confined all of our acts, including our speech, to what is necessary we should, it is true, have to dispense with the spurious glow of satisfaction and the sense of self-importance which accompany the " see me busy " attitude, but we should avoid much suffering and waste of time. The Path of Necessity is the straight path to our goal. The many side-roads that lead off from it are set with pitfalls. In regard to action the question " Why ? " is always fundamental. Only after it is satisfactorily answered should arise the subsidiary interrogatives, " What ? ", " Where ? ", " When ? " and " How ? ".

It is recorded that when Alexander, mis-called the Great, that prominent leader of the cult of Doing, put to Aristotle the question, " Master, how can I reform the whole world ? ", he was answered, " Alexander, reform thyself." That is a line of action the necessity for which is easily demonstrable and which is always in order. Example is more potent than precept and every self-regenerated individual becomes a centre of spiritual action from whom and from whose own daily life radiate the higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellowmen.

But quite aside from the vastly greater importance to the world of what we *are* than of what we *do*, acting first and thinking afterward—if at all —is often productive of serious harm and not only to the actor himself. " It takes a very wise man to do good works without danger of doing incalculable harm ", wrote H.P.B., who pointed out also that " more mischief has been done by emotional charity than sentimentalists care to face ". Action must be based upon sound principles and hence the paramount importance of the study of Theosophy. " We have to do good, and we have to do it *rightly*, with knowledge." And as Mr. Judge has said " Let us hurry nothing. Eternity is here all the time."

The State of the Maharaja of Mysore has numerous institutions which quietly serve the cause of culture, and their influence extends beyond the boundaries of the State. One new society has been inaugurated—the Moulvi and Pandits' Association of the Training College at Mysore. Professor Shushtery, whose excellent *Outlines of Islamic Culture* in two volumes is reviewed in the September *Aryan Path* delivered the inaugural address and rightly remarked that it was a happy augury for the whole of India that for the first time the Moulvis and Pundits had set an example by joining together, for they " formed the heart and soul of the society ". He added :—

> Living as they did in the land of Gautama Buddha, and Sri Krishna who preached universal love and sympathy without any distinction of caste, creed, race or nation or religion, they must follow that great teaching and treat the entire humanity as they would treat their own brethren. Their greatness did not lie in the performance of certain rituals or in turning to this side or that, but in realising truth, in speaking it and in doing good to all.
>
> The fundamental principles of Islam and Hinduism, were the same. The differences lay only in certain forms of rituals etc. Both the religions preached oneness of God and he failed to see why the two classes of people should not live in peace, and why they should not understand each other better. Moulvis and Pundits, as learned members, might go deeper into their respective religions and realise the unity of purpose beneath all the multiplicity of forms. They must convert their association into a centre of culture and civilisation, creating a feeling of harmony and unity not only among themselves, but among their countrymen as well.

Professor A. R. Wadia who presided did well in sounding a note of warning. Advising them to have a mutual and sympathetic understanding of one another he added that—

> The members must feel that theirs was not the final word on anything, that others had also something to say or contribute to the building up of that magnificent fabric of truth, which no single human individual had alone found out. He emphasised the need for mutual sympathy and toleration, without which no association could hope to flourish.

THE GOSPEL OF "HIND SWARAJ"

All good and evil things in humanity have their roots in human character, and this character is, and has been, conditioned by the endless chain of cause and effect. But this conditioning applies to the future as well as to the present and the past. Selfishness, indifference, and brutality can never be the normal state of the race—to believe so would be to despair of humanity—and that no Theosophist can do. Progress can be attained, and only attained, by the development of the nobler qualities. Now, true evolution teaches us that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism ; and in the strictest sense this is true with regard to man. Every Theosophist, therefore, is bound to do his utmost to help on, by all the means in his power, every wise and well-considered social effort which has for its object the amelioration of the condition of the poor. Such efforts should be made with a view to their ultimate social emancipation, or the development of the sense of duty in those who now so often neglect it in nearly every relation of life.—H. P. B.

The plan of quiet passive resistance, or rather, laying under the wind, is good and ought to work in all attacks. Retreat within your own heart and there keep firmly still. Resist without resisting. It is possible and should be attained.—W. Q. JUDGE.

The September issue of *The Aryan Path* is devoted to Gandhiji's mighty little volume, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*, which Mr. Middleton Murry believes to be "the greatest book that has been written in modern times". G. D. H. Cole finds that it has "deep power to disturb—much deeper power than it could have had when it was written", *i.e.*, in 1908. Gerald Heard describes *Hind Swaraj* as marking the beginning of a new order, superior to Rousseau's *Social Contract* and Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*. And yet there are Indians who look upon the latter volume as their holy bible ! Nine front-rank British thinkers contribute to that issue the fruit of their meditations upon *Hind Swaraj*—one object, but as many different reflected images as there are mirroring minds.

Mr. C. Delisle Burns finds a difficulty in words, in translating correctly from one language into another. But the primary difficulty lies not in Gandhiji's words but in the ideas behind them. For the programme of Gandhiji cannot be grasped unless the old Hindu ideology is understood, at least in its essential outlines. For the average Westerner the difficulty is a real one. One contributor, the well-known chemist and economist, Professor Frederick Soddy, succumbs to it and failing to penetrate beneath the surface of *Hind Swaraj*, confines himself largely to superficial criticisms.

But not only the Westerner but also the Western-educated Indian finds difficulty in appreciating truly the basis on which Gandhiji's philosophy rests ; even so great and so sincere a patriot as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, staunch friend of Gandhiji though he is, is not able to accept wholeheartedly all of the doctrines of *Hind Swaraj* in their full implication.

It is the Western *mentality* which needs to be changed. Hundreds of Indian youths have been subtly inoculated with the virus of Occidental superiority—the Christian missionary influence of schools at home, on our own soil ; the environmental influence of foreign universities for those who go abroad ; the glamour of the showy side of Western life ; these and other such forces have not only denationalized the minds of our educated classes ; they have despiritualized them. It should not be overlooked that the *real*, humanizing and cultural, aspects of Western civilization are not assimilated by the majority among them. The educated classes, therefore, are not able to understand, much less to appreciate such statements of Gandhiji's as these :—

If India copies England, it is my firm conviction that she will be ruined.

It is my deliberate opinion that India is being ground down not under the English heel but under that of modern civilization.

The Hindu ideology, it is true, is very ancient as far as individual realization and application go ; Mr. Gerald Heard claims for Gandhiji the distinction of trying "to make the method work in what may be called the wholesale or national scale". This is only partially correct. Some great Emperors of the past—Marcus Aurelius and pre-eminently Asoka —essayed a mass application of these principles and Asoka achieved a great measure of success, as witness his great humanizing missions to the West. (See Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji's articles, "Asoka, the Practical Pacifist" in *The Aryan Path* for February 1935, and "The Foreign Missions of Asoka" in *The Aryan Path* for September 1937.)

We say this not to detract from the sublime effort India's great leader has been making but to show that his ideas and plans are not altogether novel and that present-day humanity can be guided into the path of righteousness just as Asoka led his people.

The object of Asoka's missions was no other than that of this *Hind Swaraj* number of *The Aryan Path*—to furnish the West with the necessary materials to reconstruct its tottering edifice, to enable Europe and the Americas, using these seed ideas, to transform their minds and hearts.

Old as it is, the Hindu ideology is neither dead nor moribund. As Mr. Middleton Murry points out, the stage is already set in the hundreds of thousands of Indian villages, which offer India an unique opportunity to try Gandhiji's experiment in *spiritual statecraft*. The success of the demonstration in the village community would encourage the trying out of the principles on a larger scale in society, which Mr. Murry visualizes as a great federation of village communities ; for only in application can the potency of those principles be established beyond dispute. The remedy for the ills of the world lies between the paper covers of Gandhiji's little book, but the medicine must be taken to effect a cure.

In numerous places H. P. B. has written about the defects of modern civilization and it is appropriate to draw our readers' attention to her article on "Civilization, the Death of Art and Beauty", which we reprint elsewhere.

H. P. B. condemned modern civilization as vigorously as Gandhiji does. Some of her arraignments of it are quoted in the September *Aryan Path* :—

> What good has all this great civilization and progress done to the millions in the European slums?
>
> We, Theosophists, say that your vaunted progress and civilization are no better than a host of will-o'-the-wisps, flickering over a marsh which exhales a poisonous and deadly miasma. This, because we see selfishness, crime, immorality, and all the evils imaginable, pouncing upon unfortunate mankind from this Pandora's box which you call an age of progress, and increasing *pari passu* with the growth of your material civilization. At such a price, better the inertia and inactivity of Buddhist countries, which have arisen only as a consequence of ages of political slavery.

Several contributors who are willing to go part way with Gandhiji's programme jibe at discarding the machine *in toto*. More than one tries to make the point that the spinning-wheel itself is a machine, and Mr. C. Delisle Burns suggests that even spectacles are a mechanism. This is rather begging the question ; one pair of spectacles does not serve a dozen pairs of eyes, nor does one spinning-wheel deprive a score of spinners of their livelihood. None, moreover, of the apologists for the machine, sure that it can be safely retained, tell us how we can eliminate its evils and make of it a force for good alone.

Hind Swaraj will not be understood as a manual of practical statecraft unless and until Indian statesmen apply its teachings in their individual lives. Mr. Gerald Heard is right when he points out that every revolutionary must grasp as the *first* truth, "Thou art That". Mr. Heard's power of vision portrays the philosopher-leader and the common citizen of the new order. Towards its realization he thinks we should have "not merely a policy and an economy, but also a psychiatry". Modern men are mentally sick and they have to be cured ; but neither orthodox religion nor psycho-analysis nor allopathy with its serums and injections can effect a permanent cure. "A higher consciousness" has to be unfolded by means of "a rational planned way of life". In other words what is needed is a mystical philosophy according to which man should live. This is implied all through the discussion in the book. But the religion of *Hind Swaraj* must be lived by the individual before it can be applied in and through legislation. What is the nature of that religion ?

Nationalism has become the religion of the Western masses—Bolshevism is the creed of the Russians (see "The New Religion in Russia" by C. E. M. Joad, *The Aryan Path* for November 1930) ; Fascism that of the Italians ; Nazism that of the Germans. These are faulty religions rooted in the false concept of patriotism. In India we have to learn that Patriotism is the good of the country as a unit and not of any class, and that that good should not create evil in any part of the world. False Nationalism builds up regiments of soldiers who are forced to die. True Nationalism must create an army of men who have the courage to live, to suffer and to sacrifice. *Hind Swaraj* teaches a way of life —but not some new way. It is the old, old way to be found at the core of every great religion. In Gandhiji's own words it is not "the Hindu and Mahomedan or the Zoroastrian religion, but... that religion which underlies all religions". And that is none other than the Wisdom-Religion, the ancient *Brahma-Vidya* or Theosophy.

It is a hopeful sign that there are Westerners like Irene Rathbone (who "would implore people to read" the book "suffused in light") who are ready to practise *Satyagraha*, to sacrifice themselves and to suffer persecution unresistingly, but she is puzzled about practising *Satyagraha* when violence is offered to children. That is a stumbling-block for many, which only a living faith in the Good Law and in the power of selfless love can surmount. There is no question that in extremity duty demands the laying down of one's own life, if necessary, in shielding helpless little ones for whom one is responsible.

And again there is an answer to her problem —the duty of the strong to defend and protect the weak by the method advocated in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. The *Satyagrahi* or Passive Resister is a Kshatriya, "Fortune's Favoured Soldier" who, if need be, must fight as Arjuna did without involving himself in anger or depression or cowardice and doing the deed without looking for the fruits of action. On more than one occasion Gandhiji has explained this principle.

Theosophy would say that a more vital consideration with regard to the children—and one of vastly wider import—is whether, from their earliest years, they are being taught in the home, by example and by precept, to practise *Satyagraha*. The religion of *Satyagraha* can be taught in play and in work. H. P. B. has named as one of the express objects of Theosophy the proper training of souls as well as of bodies; her views on education are summarized in *U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 35*. She printed the following significant statement in *Lucifer* for December 1890 (Vol. VII, p. 347) :—

> Educate ! Educate ! ! The children are our salvation. Just as the student of occult nature can imbue the new atoms of his body which momentarily replace the old ones, with less vicious tendencies and thus regenerate himself by moral Alchemy and attain the "Elixir of Life", so can a nation work its own regeneration by educating the new atoms of its national body, its children. .... "The child is father to the man", and the early habits of thought and feeling continue throughout life.

Most of the eminent contributors to the *Hind Swaraj* number of *The Aryan Path* are in hearty sympathy with Gandhiji and his central theme, recognizing the evils of modern civilization, the might of non-violence or the Law of Love, and the need for that individual regeneration which Mr. H. I.'A. Fausset calls "that real revolution which must happen in us all, if we are to fulfil the creative purpose of life" and to which Mr. Claude Houghton refers as "this self-rule which is the only freedom".

CIVILIZATION, THE DEATH OF ART AND BEAUTY

[The following article by H. P. B. was first published in *Lucifer*, Vol. VIII, p. 177, for May 1891.—EDS.]

In an interview with the celebrated Hungarian violinist, M. Remenyi, the *Pall Mall Gazette* reporter makes the artist narrate some very interesting experiences in the Far East. "I was the first European artist who ever played before the Mikado of Japan", he said; and reverting to that which has ever been a matter of deep regret for every lover of the artistic and the picturesque, the violinist added :—

> "On August 8th, 1886, I appeared before His Majesty—a day memorable, unfortunately, for the change of costume commanded by the Empress. She herself, abandoning the exquisite beauty of the feminine Japanese costume, appeared on that day for the first time and at my concert in European costume, and it made my heart ache to see her. I could have greeted her had I dared with a long wail of despair upon my travelled violin. Six ladies accompanied her, they themselves being clad in their native costume, and walking with infinite grace and charm."

Alas, alas, but this is not all ! The Mikado—this hitherto sacred, mysterious, invisible and unreachable personage :—

> "The Mikado himself was in the uniform of a European general ! At that time the Court etiquette was so strict, my accompanist was not permitted into His Majesty's drawing-room, and this was told me beforehand. I had a good *remplacement*, as my ambassador, Count Zaluski, who had been a pupil of Liszt, was able himself to accompany me. You will be astonished when I tell you that, having chosen for the first piece in the programme my transcription for the violin, of a C sharp minor polonaise by Chopin, a musical piece of the most intrinsic value and poetic depths, the Emperor, when I had finished, intimated to Count Ito, his first minister, that I should play it again. The Japanese taste is good. I was laden with presents of untold value, one item only being a gold-lacquer box of the seventeenth century. I played in Hong Kong and *outside* Canton, no European being allowed to live inside. There I made an interesting excursion to the Portuguese possession of Macao, visiting the cave where Camoens wrote his 'Lusiad'. It was very interesting to see outside the Chinese town of Macao a European Portuguese town which to this very day has remained unchanged since the sixteenth century. In the midst of the exquisite tropical vegetation of Java, and despite the terrific heat, I gave sixty-two concerts in sixty-seven days, travelling all over the island, inspecting its antiquities, the chief of which is a most wonderful Buddhist temple, the Boro Budhur, or Many Buddhas. This building contains six miles of figures, and is a solid pile of stone, larger than the pyramids. They have, these Javans, an extraordinarily sweet orchestra in the national Samelang, which consists of percussion instruments played by eighteen people; but to hear this orchestra, with its most weird Oriental chorus and ecstatic dances, one must have had the privilege of being invited by the Sultan of Solo, 'Sole Emperor of the World'. I have seen and heard nothing more dreamy and poetic than the Serimpis danced by nine Royal Princesses."

Where are the Æsthetes of a few years ago? Or was this little confederation of the lovers of art but one of the soap-bubbles of our *fin de siècle*, rich in promise and suggestion of many a possibility, but dead in works and act? Or, if there are any true lovers of art yet left among them, why do they not organize and send out missionaries the world over, to tell picturesque Japan and other countries ready to fall victims that, to imitate the will-o'-the-wisp of European culture and fascination, means for a non-Christian land, the committing of suicide; that it means sacrificing one's individuality for an empty show and shadow; at best it is to exchange the original and the picturesque for the vulgar and the hideous. Truly and indeed it is high time that at last something should be done in this direction, and before the deceitful civilization of the conceited nations of but yesterday has irretrievably hypnotized the older races, and made them succumb to its upas-tree wiles and supposed superiority. Otherwise, old arts and artistic creations, everything original and unique will very soon disappear. Already national dresses and time-honoured customs,

and everything beautiful, artistic, and worth preservation is fast disappearing from view. At no distant day, alas, the best relics of the past will perhaps be found only in museums in sorry, solitary, and be-ticketed samples preserved under glass!

Such is the work and the unavoidable result of our modern civilization. Skin-deep in reality in its visible effects, in the "blessings" it is alleged to have given to the world, its roots are rotten to the core. It is to its progress that selfishness and materialism, the greatest curses of the nations, are due; and the latter will most surely lead to the annihilation of art and of the appreciation of the truly harmonious and beautiful. Hitherto, materialism has only led to a universal tendency to unification on the material plane and a corresponding diversity on that of thought and spirit. It is this universal tendency, which by propelling humanity, through its ambition and selfish greed, to an incessant chase after wealth and the obtaining *at any price* of the supposed blessings of this life, causes it to aspire or rather gravitate to one level, the lowest of all—the plane of empty appearance. Materialism and indifference to all save the selfish realization of wealth and power, and the over-feeding of national and personal vanity, have gradually led nations and men to the almost entire oblivion of spiritual ideals, of the love of nature to the correct appreciation of things. Like a hideous leprosy our Western civilization has eaten its way through all the quarters of the globe and hardened the human heart. "Soul-saving" is its deceitful, lying pretext; greed for additional revenue through opium, rum, and the inoculation of European vices—the real aim. In the far East it has infected with the spirit of imitation the higher classes of the "pagans"—save China, whose national conservatism deserves our respect; and in Europe it has engrafted *fashion*—save the mark—even on the dirty, starving proletariat itself! For the last thirty years, as if some deceitful semblance of a reversion to the ancestral type—awarded to men by the Darwinian theory in its moral added to its physical characteristics—were contemplated by an evil spirit tempting mankind, almost every race and nation under the Sun in Asia has gone mad in its passion for *aping* Europe. This, added to the frantic endeavour to destroy Nature in every direction, and also every vestige of older civilizations—far superior to our own in arts, godliness, and the appreciation of the grandiose and harmonious—must result in such national calamities. Therefore, do we find hitherto artistic and picturesque Japan succumbing wholly to the temptation of justifying the "ape theory" by *simianizing* its populations in order to bring the country on a level with canting, greedy and artificial Europe!

For certainly Europe is all this. It is canting and deceitful from its diplomats down to its custodians of religion, from its political down to its social laws, selfish, greedy and brutal beyond expression in its grabbing characteristics. And yet there are those who wonder at the gradual decadence of true art, as if art could exist without imagination, fancy, and a just appreciation of the beautiful in Nature, or without poetry and high religious, hence, metaphysical aspirations! The galleries of paintings and sculpture, we hear, become every year poorer in quality, if richer in quantity. It is lamented that while there is a plethora of ordinary productions, the greater scarcity of remarkable pictures and statuary prevails. Is this not most evidently due to the facts that (*a*) the artists will very soon remain with no better models than *nature morte* (or "still life") to inspire themselves with; and (*b*) that the chief concern is not the creation of artistic objects, but their speedy sale and profits? Under such conditions, the fall of true art is only a natural consequence.

Owing to the triumphant march and the invasion of civilization, Nature, as well as man and ethics, is sacrificed, and is fast becoming artificial. Climates are changing, and the face of the whole world will soon be altered. Under the murderous hand of the pioneers of civilization, the destruction of whole primeval forests is leading to the drying up of rivers and the opening of the Canal of Suez has changed the climate of Egypt as that of Panama will divert the course of the Gulf Stream. Almost tropical countries are now becoming cold and rainy, and fertile lands threaten to be soon transformed into sandy deserts. A few years more and there will not remain within a radius of fifty miles around our large cities one single rural spot inviolate from vulgar speculation. In scenery, the picturesque and the natural is daily replaced by the grotesque and the artificial. Scarce a landscape in England but the fair body of nature is desecrated by the advertisements of "Pears' Soap" and "Beecham's Pills". The pure air of the country is polluted with smoke, the smells of greasy railway-engines, and the sickening odours of gin, whisky, and beer. And once that every natural spot in the surrounding scenery is gone, and the eye of the painter finds but the artificial and hideous products of modern speculation to rest upon, artistic taste will have to follow suit and disappear along with them.

"No man ever did or ever will work well, but either from actual sight or sight of faith", says Ruskin, speaking of art. Thus, the first quarter of the coming century may witness painters of landscapes, who have never seen an acre of land free from human improvement; and painters of figures whose ideas of female beauty of form will be based

on the wasp-like pinched-in waists of corseted, hollow-chested and consumptive society *belles*. It is not from such models that a picture deserving of the definition of Horace—" a poem without words " —is produced. Artificially draped *Parisiennes* and London Cockneys sitting for Italian *contadini* or Arab Bedouins can never replace the genuine article ; and both free Bedouins and genuine Italian peasant girls are, thanks to " civilization ", fast becoming things of the past. Where shall artists find genuine models in the coming century, when the hosts of the free Nomads of the Desert, and perchance all the negro-tribes of Africa—or what will remain of them after decimation by Christian cannons, and the rum and opium of the Christian civilizer—will have donned European coats and top hats ? And that this is precisely what awaits art under the beneficial progress of modern civilization, is self-evident to all.

Aye ! let us boast of the blessings of civilization, by all means. Let us brag of our sciences and the grand discoveries of the age, its achievements in mechanical arts, its railroads, telephones and electric batteries ; but let us not forget, meanwhile, to purchase at fabulous prices (almost as great as those given in our day for a prize dog, or an old prima donna's song) the paintings and statuary of uncivilized, barbarous antiquity and of the middle ages : for such objects of art will be reproduced no more. Civilization has tolled their eleventh hour. It has rung the death-knell of the old arts, and the last decade of our century is summoning the world to the funeral of all that was grand, genuine, and original in the old civilizations. Would Raphael, O ye lovers of art, have created one single of his many Madonnas, had he had, instead of Fornarina and the once Juno-like women of the Trastevero of Rome to inspire his genius, only the present-day models, or the niched Virgins of the nooks and corners of modern Italy, in crinolines and high-heeled boots ? Or would Andrea del Sarto have produced his famous " Venus and Cupid " from a modern East End working girl—one of the latest victims to fashion—holding under the shadow of a gigantic hat *à la mousquetaire*, feathered like the scalp of an Indian chief, a dirty, scrofulous brat from the slums ? How could Titian have ever immortalized his golden-haired patrician ladies of Venice, had he been compelled to move all his life in the society of our actual " professional beauties ", with their straw-coloured, dyed capillaries that transform human hair into the fur of a yellow Angora cat ? May not one venture to state with the utmost confidence that the world would never have had the Athena Limnia of Phidias—that ideal of beauty *in face and form*—had Aspasia, the Milesian, or the fair daughters of Hellas, whether in the days of Pericles or in any other, disfigured that " form " with stays and bustle, and coated that " face " with white enamel, after the fashion of the varnished features of the mummies of the dead Egyptians.

We see the same in architecture. Not even the genius of Michael Angelo himself could have failed to receive its death-blow at the first sight of the Eiffel Tower, or the Albert Hall, or more horrible still, the Albert Memorial. Nor, for the matter of that, could it have received any suggestive idea from the Colosseum and the palace of the Cæsars, in their present *whitewashed* and *repaired* state ! Whither, then shall we, in our days of civilization, go to find the natural, or even simply the picturesque ? Is it still to Italy, to Switzerland or Spain ? But the Bay of Naples—even if its waters be as blue and transparent as on the day when the people of Cumæ selected its shores for a colony, and its surrounding scenery as gloriously beautiful as ever —thanks to that spirit of mimicry which has infected sea and land, has now lost its most artistic and most original features. It is bereft of its lazy, dirty, but intensely picturesque figures of old ; of its *lazzaroni* and *barcarolos*, its fishermen and country girls. Instead of the former's red or blue Phrygian cap, and the latter's statuesque, half-nude figure and poetical rags, we see now-a-days but the caricatured specimens of modern civilization and fashion. The gay *tarantella* resounds no longer on the cool sands of the moonlit shore ; it is replaced by that libel on Terpsichore, the modern quadrille, in the gas-lit, gin-smelling sailor's *trattorias*. Filth still pervades the land, as of yore ; but it is made the more apparent on the threadbare city coat, the mangled chimney-pot hat and the once fashionable, now cast-away European bonnet. Picked up in the hotel gutters, they now grace the unkempt heads of the once picturesque Neapolitans. The type of the latter has died out, and there is nothing to distinguish the *lazzaroni* from the Venetian *gondoliere*, the Calabrian brigand, or the London street-sweeper and beggar. The still, sunlit waters of *Canal Grande* bear no longer their gondolas, filled on festival days with gaily dressed Venetians, with picturesque boatmen and girls. The black gondola that glides silently under the heavy carved balconies of the old patrician palazze, reminds one now more of a black floating coffin, with a solemn-looking, dark-clothed undertaker paddling it on towards the Styx, than of the gondola of thirty years ago. Venice looks more gloomy now than during the days of Austrian slavery from which it was rescued by Napoleon III. Once on shore, its *gondoliere* is scarcely distinguishable from his " fare ", the British M.P. on his holiday-tour in the old city of the

Doges. Such is the levelling hand of all-destroying civilization.

It is the same all over Europe. Look at Switzerland. Hardly a decade ago, every Canton had its distinguishing national constume, as clean and fresh as it was peculiar. Now the people are ashamed to wear it. They want to be mistaken for foreign guests, to be regarded as a civilized nation which follows suit even in fashion. Cross over to Spain. Of all the relics of old, the smell of rancid oil and garlic is alone left to remind one of the poetry of the old days in the country of Cid. The graceful mantilla has almost disappeared ; the proud hidalgo-beggar has taken himself off from the street-corner ; the nightly serenades of love-sick Romeos are gone out of fashion ; and the duenna contemplates going in for woman's rights. The members of the " Social Purity " Associations may say "thank God " to this and lay the change at the door of Christian and moral reforms of civilization. But has morality gained anything in Spain with the disappearance of the nocturnal lovers and duennas? We have every right to say, *no*. A Don Juan *outside* a house is less dangerous than one *inside*. Social immorality is as rife as ever—if not more so, in Spain, and it must be so, indeed, when even " Harper's Guide Book " quotes in its last edition as follows : " Morals in all classes, especially in the higher, are in the most degraded state.. Veils, indeed, are thrown aside, and serenades are rare, but gallantry and intrigue are as active as ever. The men think little of their married obligations ; the women ... are willing victims of unprincipled gallantry." (*Spain*, " Madrid ", page 678.) In this, Spain is but on a par with all other countries civilized or now civilizing, and is assuredly not worse than many another country that could be named ; but that which may be said of it with truth is, that what it has lost in poetry through civilization, it has gained in hypocrisy and loose morals. The *Cortejo* has turned into the *petit crevé ;* the castanets have become silent, because, perhaps, the noise of the uncorked champagne bottles affords more excitement to the rapidly civilizing nation ; and the " Andalouse au teint bruni " having taken to cosmetics and face-enamel, " la Marquesa d'Almedi " may be said to have been buried with Alfred de Musset.

The gods have indeed been propitious to the Alhambra. They have permitted it to be burnt before its chaste Moresque beauty had been finally desecrated, as are the rock-cut temples of India, the Pyramids and other relics by drunken orgies. This superb relic of the Moors had already suffered, once before, by Christian improvement. It is a tradition still told in Granada, and history too, that the monks of Ferdinand and Isabella had made of Alhambra —that " palace of petrified flowers dyed with the hues of the wings of angels "—a filthy prison for thieves and murderers. Modern speculators might have done worse ; they might have polluted its walls and pearl-inlaid ceilings, the lovely gilding and stucco, the fairy-like arabesques, and the marble and gossamer-like carvings, with commercial advertisements, after the Inquisitors had already once before covered the building with whitewash and permitted the prison-keepers to use Alhambra Halls for their donkeys and cattle. Doubting but little that the fury of the *Madrilenos* for imitating the French and English must have already, at this stage of modern civilization, infected every province of Spain, we may regard that lovely country as dead. A friend speaks, as an eye-witness, of " cocktails " spilled near the marble fountain of the Alhambra, over the blood-marks left by the hapless Abancerages slain by Boabdil, and of a Parisian *cancan pur sang* performed by working girls and soldiers of Granada, in the Court of Lions !

But these are only trifling signs of the time and the spread of *culture* among the middle and the lower classes. Wherever the spirit of aping possesses the heart of the nation—the poor working classes —there the elements of nationality disappear and the country is on the eve of losing its individuality and all things change for the worse. What is the use of talking so loudly of " the benefits of *Christian* civilization ", of its having softened public morals, refined national customs and manners, etc., etc., when our modern civilization has achieved quite the reverse ! Civilization has depended, for ages, says Burke, " upon two principles ... the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion ". And how many true *gentlemen* have we left, when compared even with the days of half-barbarous knighthood ? Religion has become canting hypocrisy and the genuine religious spirit is regarded now-a-days as insanity. Civilization, it is averred, " has destroyed brigandage, established public security, elevated morality and built railways which now honeycomb the face of the globe ". Indeed ? Let us analyze seriously and impartially all these " benefits " and we shall soon find that civilization has done nothing of the kind. At best it has put a false nose on every evil of the Past, adding hypocrisy and false pretence to the natural ugliness of each. If it is true to say that it has put down in some civilized centres of Europe—near Rome, in the Bois de Boulogne or on Hampstead Heath—*banditti* and highway-men, it is also as true that it has, thereby, destroyed robbery only as a speciality, the latter having now become a common occupation in every city great or small. The robber and cut-throat has

only exchanged his dress and appearance by donning the livery of civilization—the ugly modern attire. Instead of being robbed under the vault of thick woods and the protection of darkness, people are robbed now-a-days under the electric light of saloons and the protection of trade-laws and police-regulations. As to open day-light brigandage, the *Mafia* of New Orleans and the *Mala Vita* of Sicily, with high officialdom, population, police, and jury forced to play into the hands of regularly organised bands of murderers, thieves and tyrants[1] in the full glare of European "culture", show how far our civilization has succeeded in establishing public security, or Christian religion in softening the hearts of men and the ways and customs of a barbarous past. Modern Cyclopædias are very fond of expatiating upon the decadence of Rome and its *pagan* horrors. But if the latest editions of the *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography* were honest enough to make a parallel between those "monsters of depravity" of ancient civilization, Messalina and Faustina, Nero and Commodus, and modern European aristocracy, it might be found that the latter could give odds to the former—in social hypocrisy, at any rate. Between "the shameless and beastly debauchery" of an Emperor Commodus, and as beastly a depravity of more than one—"Honourable", high official representative of the people, the only difference to be found is that while Commodus was a member of all the sacerdotal colleges of Paganism, the modern debauchee may be a high member of the Evangelical Christian Churches, a distinguished and pious pupil of Moody and Sankey and what not. It is not the Calchas of Homer, who was the type of the Calchas in the Operette "La Belle Helène", but the modern sacerdotal Pecksniff and his followers.

As to the blessings of railways and "the annihilation of space and time", it is still an undecided question—without speaking of the misery and starvation the introduction of steam engines and machinery in general has brought for years on those who depend on their manual labour—whether railways do not kill more people in one month than the brigands of all Europe used to murder in a whole year. The victims of railroads, moreover, are killed under circumstances which surpass in horror anything the cut-throats may have devised. One reads almost daily of railway disasters in which people are "burned to death in the blazing wreckage", "mangled and crushed out of recognition" and killed by dozens and scores.[2] This is a trifle worse than the highwaymen of old Newgate.

Nor has crime been abated at all by the spread of civilization; though owing to the progress of science in chemistry and physics, it has become more secure from detection and more ghastly in its realization than it ever has been. Speak of Christian civilization having improved public morals; of Christianity being the only religion which has established and recognized Universal Brotherhood! Look at the brotherly feeling shown by American Christians to the Red Indian and the Negro, whose *citizenship* is the farce of the age. Witness the love of the Anglo-Indians for the "mild Hindu", the Mussulman, and the Buddhist. See "how these Christians love each other" in their incessant law litigations, their libels against each other, the mutual hatred of the Churches and of the sects. Modern civilization and Christianity are oil and water—they will never mix. Nations among which the most horrible crimes are daily perpetrated; nations which rejoice in Tropmanns and Jack the Rippers, in fiends like Mrs. Reeves the trader in baby slaughter—to the number of 300 victims as is believed—for the sake of filthy lucre; nations which not only permit but encourage a Monaco with its hosts of suicides, that patronize prize-fights, bull-fights, useless and cruel sport and even indiscriminate vivisection—such nations have no right to boast of their civilization. Nations furthermore which from political considerations, dare not put down slave-trade *once for all*, and out of revenue-greed, hesitate to abolish opium and whiskey trades, fattening on the untold misery and degradation of millions of human beings, have no right to call themselves either Christian or civilized. A civilization finally that leads only to the destruction of every noble, artistic feeling in man, can only deserve the epithet of barbarous. We, the modern-day Europeans, are Vandals as great, if not greater than Atilla with his savage hordes.

Cosummatum est. Such is the work of our modern Christian civilization and its direct effects. The destroyer of art, the Shylock, who, for every mite of gold it gives, demands and receives in re-

[1] Read the "Cut Throats' Paradise" in the *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1877, and the digest of it in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of April 15th, 1891, "Murder as a Profession".

[2] To take one instance. A Reuter's telegram from America, where such accidents are almost of daily occurrence, gives the following details of a wrecked train: "One of the cars which was attached to a gravel train and which contained five Italian workmen, was thrown forward into the centre of the wreck, and the whole mass caught fire. Two of the men were killed outright and the remaining three were injured, pinioned in the wreckage. As the flames reached them their cries and groans were heartrending. Owing to the position of the car and the intense heat the rescuers were unable to reach them, and were compelled to watch them slowly burn to death. It is understood that all the victims leave families."

turn a pound of human flesh, in the heart-blood, in the physical and mental suffering of the masses, in the loss of everything true and loveable—can hardly pretend to deserve grateful or respectful recognition. The unconsciously prophetic *fin de siècle*, in short, is the long ago foreseen *fin de cycle*; when according to *Manjunâtha Sutra*, "Justice will have died, leaving as its successor blind Law, and as its Guru and guide—*Selfishness*; when wicked things and deeds will have to be regarded as meritorious, and holy actions as madness". Beliefs are dying out, divine life is mocked at; art and genius, truth and justice are daily sacrificed to the insatiable mammon of the age—money grubbing. The artificial replaces everywhere the real, the false substitutes the true. Not a sunny valley, not a shadowy grove left immaculate on the bosom of mother nature. And yet what marble fountain in fashionable square or city park, what bronze lions or tumble-down dolphins with upturned tails can compare with an old worm-eaten, moss-covered, weather-stained country well, or a rural windmill in a green meadow! What Arc de Triomphe can ever compare with the low arch of Grotto Azzurra, at Capri, and what city park or Champs Elysées, rival Sorrento, "the wild garden of the world", the birthplace of Tasso? Ancient civilizations have never sacrificed Nature to speculation, but holding it as divine, have honoured her natural beauties by the erection of works of art, such as our modern electric civilization could never produce even in dream. The sublime grandeur, the mournful gloom and majesty of the ruined temples of Pæstum, that stand for ages like so many sentries over the sepulchre of the Past and the forlorn hope of the Future amid the mountain wilderness of Sorrento, have inspired more men of genius than the new civilization will ever produce. Give us the *banditti* who once infested these ruins, rather than the railroads that cut through the old Etruscan tombs; the first may take the purse and life of the few; the second are undermining the lives of the millions by poisoning with foul gases the sweet breath of the pure air. In ten years, by century the XXth, Southern France with its Nice and Cannes, and even Engadine, may hope to rival the London atmosphere with its fogs, thanks to the increase of population and changes of climate. We hear that Speculation is preparing a new iniquity against Nature: smoky, greasy, stench-breathing *funiculaires* (baby-railways) are being contemplated for some world-renowned mountains. They are preparing to creep like so many loathsome, fire-vomiting reptiles over the immaculate body of the Jungfrau, and a railway-tunnel is to pierce the heart of the snow-capped Virgin mountain, the glory of Europe. And why not? Has not national speculation pulled down the priceless remains of the grand Temple of Neptune at Rome, to build over its colossal corpse and sculptured pillars the present Custom House?

Are we so wrong then, in maintaining that modern civilization with its Spirit of Speculation is the very *Genius of Destruction*; and as such, what better words can be addressed to it than this definition of Burke:—

"A Spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors."

H. P. B.

IS REASON ENOUGH?

The great, and the wise, and the mighty, are not with us. That I fear we must all own to, however much we may grieve to say so; and the more we read of the history, the poetry, the biography, and the literature of the age, the more we will think so.[1]

Thus said a courageous Scottish clergyman more than fifty years ago. But even to-day there are still many people of the British race under the sway of Church Christianity. There is, however, a considerable minority which is avowedly not under such sway, and Mr. Ernest Thurtle, M. P., makes an appeal to them in his recent pamphlet, *The Fellowship of Reason*.[2] Mr. Thurtle is a member of the British Rationalist Association, and for two reasons (one "sentimental", the other practical) would urge on those who think like him to join this organization. The "sentimental" reason is that such persons would have the support of mutual sympathy, and the practical one is that their being joined together thus, would give added strength to effect "rational" reforms.

Organized Christianity has been the great stumbling-block of rational reform. In the British Isles (with which Mr. Thurtle is concerned) it has hampered reforms in the marriage laws; has managed to secure a foothold in Wireless Broadcasting; has interfered with Sunday freedom; has misled and still misleads the young by its outworn teaching in schools; and perpetuates its irrationality in such ceremonies as the armistice service at the Cenotaph, and the elaborate ritual of the

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[1] Quoted in *The Theosophist*, Vol. II, p. 175. May 1881.

[2] Watts and Co., London, 6*d*.

Coronation of the King. This stranglehold of the Church on the State is to be deprecated, and organized Rationalism (for organization means strength, according to Mr. Thurtle) should do something about it.

Who are these people that Mr. Thurtle would gather together under the ægis of the Rationalist Press Association?

> They are known as Rationalists, Freethinkers, Agnostics, or Sceptics. Among them are necessarily to be found considerable variations in outlook, but they have strongly as a common basis a desire to be in a state of intellectual peace with themselves—to be able, in fact, to give reasons for any convictions they affirm.

Mr. Thurtle confesses, however, that there are some

> who agree with the Rationalist point of view who nevertheless decline to identify themselves with organized Rationalism because they consider its policy too negative, or think that it does not deal sufficiently with fundamental issues.

None more than the Theosophists can admire the selfless and altruistic characters of the great Rationalists. None more than the Theosophists can agree with Mr. Thurtle that Churchianity with its superstitions and hypocrisy has been a great bar to healthy progress, and with much of his pamphlet they must be in sympathy. But if Mr. Thurtle wishes to destroy, he must have ready to hand some plan of reconstruction. Shake off the shackles that the Church has laid on the nation—and then what? Mr. Thurtle has not only to clear off abuses, he has also to deal with the race-mind, and unless he can change the minds of individuals, one by one, all the "reforms" he would effect, will not avail. We agree with those Rationalists who consider his policy too negative "because it does not deal sufficiently with fundamental issues". Mr. Thurtle tells us: "The site must be cleared of the old building before the new one can be erected." That is true, but the plans of the new building should be ready so that construction can follow the work of destruction.

And then, from the Theosophical point of view, the Rationalist stand has one great weakness. It is true that organized religion with its personal God has distorted truth almost beyond recognition; its superstitions are an insult to every thinking mind—but from under this mass of rubbish may be disinterred some jewels of truth. And organized religion does technically recognize a Court of Appeal higher than the mind. To Mr. Thurtle, it would seem, mind is supreme; but one wonders whether, if Rationalism became the dominant force in the world, it would not also become crystallised into a creed, and then some neo-rationalism would spring up as a heresy and become the mother of many sects. *Quot homines, tot sententiæ* still holds good.

There must be a source deeper than the mind to which man can have resort, a source that lies beyond, a unity into which all can be resolved. This can be apprehended only by the intuition, but when apprehended carries conviction to the mind.

When H. P. Blavatsky wrote her first book, *Isis Unveiled*, she attacked with even more vigour than Mr. Thurtle the hypocrisy of Church Christianity and the evils of priestcraft. Her first work was destructive, a clearing of the ground, but also it held within itself the seeds of future construction which blossomed into flower in her later books, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy* and *The Voice of the Silence*. One of her Teachers wrote many years ago:—

> It is belief in God and Gods that makes two-thirds of humanity the slaves of a handful of those who deceive them under the false pretence of saving them.

If organized Rationalism can free us from such slavery, well and good; but it can never do so if it sets up the human brain in place of the God and Gods of the Churches.

Two quotations from *Isis Unveiled* may be given:—

> "There is a *personal* God, and there is a *personal* Devil!" thunders the Christian preacher. "Let him be anathema who dares say nay!" "There is no personal God, except the gray matter in our brain", contemptuously replies the materialist. "And there is no Devil. Let him be considered thrice an idiot who says aye." Meanwhile the occultists and *true* philosophers heed neither of the two combatants, but keep perseveringly at their work. None of them believe in the absurd, passionate, and fickle God of superstition, but all of them believe in good and evil. Our human reason, the emanation of our finite mind, is certainly incapable of comprehending a divine intelligence, an endless and infinite entity; and, according to strict logic, that which transcends our understanding and would remain thoroughly incomprehensible to our senses cannot exist for us; hence, it does *not* exist. So far finite reason agrees with science, and says: "There is no God." But, on the other hand, our *Ego*, that which lives and thinks and feels independently of us in our mortal casket, does more than believe. It *knows* that there exists a God in nature, for the sole and invincible Artificer of all lives in us as we live in *Him*. No dogmatic faith or exact science is able to uproot that intuitional feeling in man, when he has once fully realized it in himself.
>
> Sincere skepticism as to the immortality of man's soul is a malady; a malformation of the physical brain, and has existed in every age. As there are infants born with a caul upon their heads, so there are men who are incapable to their last hour of ridding themselves of that kind of caul evidently enveloping their organs of spirituality.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Dr. Rhine of Duke University whose carefully planned and conscientiously executed experiments are establishing the facts that clairvoyance is a reality and that all clairvoyants are not dupes and frauds—is being attacked by "scholars and scientists". This was bound to happen; in fact such attacks indicate that Dr. Rhine is not wrong. Anyone who has ever tried to extend the boundaries of the known universe, and penetrate the veil of the invisible, has encountered opposition from the conservative and the orthodox theologians and scientists. H. P. B. encountered fierce opposition from psychologists, scientists, philologists and others who, however learned in their own restricted fields of knowledge, were nincompoops in regard to psychic and spiritual matters. Mr. Gerald Heard is one of the defenders of Dr. Rhine; in an article in the London *Star* he gives the true story of the discoverer of X-rays saying :—

> At present we are seeing how shrewd an anthropologist was old Röntgen, when, having discovered X-rays, and knowing the reaction of his fellow-scientists to radically new facts, he made his first comment to his wife, after a week's day-and-night rechecking: "Well, it's true. And now there'll be the devil to pay!"

Is this not reminiscent of an incident in H. P. B.'s life? In one place she chronicles that she was "ordered to begin telling the public the truth about the phenomena and their mediums", and remarks :—

> And now my martyrdom will begin! I shall have all the Spiritualists against me, in addition to the Christians and the Skeptics. Thy will, oh M. be done!

The bigotry of men of science is strongest in the sphere of medicine. In the face of indisputable facts and figures, men of medicine as a rule go on holding to their theories. For example, though statistics clearly prove that vaccination is no preventive for smallpox many doctors go on believing in that superstition. Miss Lily Loat in an article in *Answers* (16th July) quotes the great medical historian, Dr. Charles Creighton, who called vaccination "a grotesque superstition". She shows how in Great Britain "all the time smallpox has been disappearing vaccination has been doing the same." She comments on conditions in this country :—

> India is a reservoir of smallpox, and the population of India is probably the most vaccinated in the world, with 86 persons per thousand vaccinated or re-vaccinated every year, compared with only 6 per thousand in England and Wales. But in India all the forces that produce smallpox are present—extreme poverty, bad feeding, and an entire absence of sanitation.

If our provincial governments would attend with half the zeal to improving sanitary conditions that they display in distributing vaccines and serums, real benefit to public health would ensue. Recently the city of Bombay has been suffering from an attack of typhoid fever. Much money has been spent on inoculating people. May we draw the attention of the members of the city's municipal corporation to the words of Major N. T. Whitehead, M.B., B.S., late Government Bacteriologist, Welcome Tropical Research Laboratory, Khartoum, who contributes the article on the subject "Typhoid Fever" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* :—

> If house drainage were always perfectly carried out, sewage satisfactorily disposed of, water-supply efficiently protected or treated, patients segregated, and the typhoid material excreted by them and typhoid "carriers" effectually annihilated—if, in short, scientific cleanliness were completely attained, the disease would disappear, or be at least excessively rare.

Hygiene and sanitation introduced in time would make serums and vaccines as redundant as they are useless.

Speaking of civilization the following extract shows how "logical" is the desire and the effort of Western governments to avoid war. G. W. L. Day writes in *Social Credit* (24th June) :—

> The Japanese airplanes which bomb Canton need petrol, and Japan has no oil wells. The bulk of her petrol comes from America. About one-quarter of it is supplied by the Royal Dutch Company, which is 40 per cent. British.
>
> In the same way, much of the lead and nickel composing the bullets which Japan is using against the Chinese come from Canadian nickel mines and Australian lead mines. Japan has been importing three times her normal quantities of ores and metals from Great Britain and America since the war began. Then again, some of the bombing machines now used by Franco in Spain come from British factories.
>
> In any war, however terrible, it is certain that a large proportion of the missiles and engines of destruction would come from British sources.

It is little use abusing the capitalist mine-owners and manufacturers, when their employees, though Trade Unionists, continue to dig nickel and lead and manufacture bombs. The British Trade Union Movement is one of the best organised and is very powerful. Why then does it not lead its millions of members to stop such activities? Is not the answer this—that labourers, though organized themselves, are fond of amassing capital, and enjoying its fruits and care not for ideals of peace and justice? Once again, the philosophy of economic socialism being wrong those who try to live up to it are bound to go wrong. H.P.B. described such materialistic socialism and communism as "insane dreams" (*U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 22*). Mere physical and economic reforms will not serve

humanity's purpose—as is already exemplified by Soviet Russia—unless the *mind* of the race is educated in the soul-satisfying philosophy of the ancient Aryans.

Lord Samuel, speaking at the World Congress of Faiths at Cambridge late in June, stressed the change in the intellectual atmosphere in the last half century. Physical science is no longer identified with materialism, he declared; "hardly any biologist to-day would call himself a materialist". More and more, he brought out, the trend is to link up philosophy with science and to regard the latter—he referred particularly to the popular exponents of science like Eddington and Jeans—as confirming the religious position rather than the atheistic. The stand of Soviet Russia, therefore, is anachronistic. To quote from the report of his address in *The Manchester Guardian* :—

> Viewing the world to-day, it is only in Russia that we find materialism dominating thought, and while Bolshevism considers itself to be the last word in progress, as a matter of fact it has been left far behind by the march of thought in the last fifty or sixty years. Indeed, I often think that Bolshevism in its fundamental ideas is absurdly old-fashioned.

The Russian iconoclasts are leagues ahead of the orthodox in so far as their repudiation of the philosophical absurdity of an extra-cosmic and anthropomorphic God goes, but it is as grave a philosophical error to refuse to recognize an all-pervading, all-sustaining Divine Principle of Life as the origin and basis of cosmic evolution. The existence of that Impersonal Deity is one of the innate ideas to deny which sincerely is to court soul-blindness.

Great Britain has been regarded as one of the last strongholds of freedom of thought and of speech. The insidious menace of authoritarianism, however, casts its threatening shadow even there. There is food for thought in the fact that seventy members of Parliament recently set their names to an appeal to the Home Secretary asking him to forbid the World Union of Freethinkers to hold its international congress in England in September, as planned. *The Manchester Guardian* roundly condemns this "remarkable request", and applauds Sir Samuel Hoare's rejection of it. The *Guardian* declares :—

> Atheism is not new in England, and if we are to suppress it now we should have to start by a bonfire of English literature. Tolerance becomes a virtue only when one must tolerate something of which one disapproves, and until the seventy members have learnt that, they do not deserve seats in a democratic Parliament.

The dogmatic atheist, to be sure, wears the same coat of bigotry as the sectarian, though he wears it the other side out. But genuine free thought is agnosticism rather than atheism. And it is better that thought should be free, even if it be mistaken, than that all men should be forced to think alike. True Theosophists do not attempt to impose upon others the Truth which they have found or to subject the mind of any other to their own. Their policy is not to degrade truth by forcing it upon unwilling minds. Only the open-minded seeker recognizes truth when he finds it, and in him alone can it work its beneficent transformation. Wrote H. P. B. :—

> Hitherto, the most apt workers in practical Theosophy, its most devoted members were those recruited from the ranks of agnostics and even of materialists. No genuine, no sincere searcher after truth can ever be found among the *blind* believers in the "Divine Word", let the latter be claimed to come from Allah, Brahma or Jehovah, or their respective Kurân, Purâna and Bible.

Sawai Jay Singh's life is a corroborative testimony supporting H. P. B.'s view that the ancient Indians' astronomy was an independent and indigenous development and was not borrowed from foreign sources—Egyptian and Babylonian, according to the view still prevalent. In an article in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* (31st July) on Sawai Jay Singh, "Jaipur's Astronomer King", "F. J. F." writes :—

> At that time almost all the Indian princes—especially in Rajputana—amused themselves studying astrology and acquired thereby some knowledge of astronomy. Jai Singh made himself master of it and undertook, at the request of the Emperor Mahomed Shah, to revise the Hindu calendar. For this purpose he constructed observatories at Delhi, Ujjain, Benares, Muttra and Jaipur, and having at his disposal only a few Persian instruments, invented new ones on a much larger scale from which remarkably accurate results were obtained...King Emmanuel of Portugal sent a learned man, Xavier da Silva, who gave Jai Singh the tables of la Hire which had only just been published in 1702. The royal astronomer tested their accuracy and discovered slight mistakes in them...His own tables were so exact that the greatest of English and continental scientists have been unable to detect errors in his tables of more than a few seconds!

An account of H. P. B.'s visit to Sawai Jay Singh's observatory is given in a letter of H. P. B. printed in the *U. L. T. London Bulletin* for June, wherein H. P. B. refers to Jay Singh as an "adept and astrologer":—

> His observatory occupying an enormous palace with immense court-yards and towers, is full of machinery, the name and use of which is entirely forgotten.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

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THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF ; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*", and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult
or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate ; it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the Form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished to Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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